

WASHINGTON POST
2 April 1985

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE **A-12**

A REAGAN INTERVIEW

reporters David Hoffman and Lou Cannon

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In this country, even though your popularity remains very high, on the issue of Nicaragua polls show that there are many Americans opposed to your policy there and the Congress shows very little inclination to give you the \$14 million you've asked. Do you have any new proposals or ideas that would change this view in Congress?

Well, nothing that I can talk about here. But let me just say, I know this about what the polls show and I know what happens up on the Hill. But we've been subjected, in this country, to a very sophisticated lobbying campaign by a totalitarian government—the Sandinistas. There has been a disinformation program that is virtually worldwide, and we know that the Soviets and the Cubans have such a disinformation network that is beyond anything that we can match.

And, of course, I don't think the people have heard actually the thing that we're trying to explain of what is going on. People go down, some people, to Nicaragua and claim they come back now with views that are favorable to that totalitarian government. But why don't they go to some of the neighboring countries and talk to the thousands and thousands of refugees and ask them why they fled Nicaragua?

Can you tell us something about the accomplishments in this area that you believe you've achieved?

Well, we're making headway and have been successful in getting co-operation and trading information, intelligence information, getting agreements with other countries with regard to extradition and denying their countries as shelter for terrorists who then cross a border and are reasonably, have been in the past reasonably safe if they leave the country where they've been terrorizing, and just getting much more mutual agreement about the need for all of us to work together.

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